S.F.T.S
LIBRARY

The REFORMED JOURNAL

Volume 3 — No. 9 | A Periodical of Reformed Comment and Opinion | September, 1953

The American Way of Life

THE American has always been something of a paradox; he has from the beginning worshipped God with a glance to Mammon, or worshipped Mammon with a regretful awareness of God. In recent years, however, the traditional idealisms have become dimmer, and the pride and satisfaction in things more intense, so much dimmer that the Vice-president of General Motors could in a speech at the industrial cavalcade "The Parade of Progress" identify the American way with the booster's paradise, an endless profusion of things. Mammon towered above the rows of gleaming cars.

The cavalcade was interesting. The film showed arrestingly beautiful industrial designs. The cars and planes had the hard glamor of superb craftsmanship in steel and color. Here was creative industry, a fruitful wedding of natural form and the dream of man, no mere imitation of nature but rather a fusion of the geometrical lines and balance of the bird with beaten metal. Ask the fact for the form, said Emerson; here it was bird become jet plane. But most interesting of all was the keynoter's speech in which he undertook to define the American way of life. And that way consisted of a geometrical ratio in the increase of things: more and better cars, more and better planes, more machines in a paradise of instruments. The hope of the exhibition said the speaker was to set a boy dreaming — of things. This is the American way of life then; the American in charge of an Aladdin's lamp of technology calling up the industrial jinn to bring into being an ever growing flood of machines. Having achieved this we can sing with Sandburg's woman, named Tomorrow:

> We are the greatest city
> The greatest nation:
> Nothing like us ever was. . . .

Was the speaker right in identifying the American way of life with the abundance of things? Then the "past is a bucket of ashes," and then the great voices of the American past are no longer even echoes. For the Puritan put the city of God before the city of man. As Edward Taylor said

> Make me Thy loom then, knit therein
> This twine
> And make Thy Holy Spirit, Lord,
> wind quills.

Despite the sordid branches, the main road of the American Revolution was called *Freedom*. Emerson and the Romantics said things must not be allowed to vault into the saddle and control mankind. Whitman's hope of democracy rested upon ideal values — brotherhood not social security. The great reformers from Garrison to Bryan, the countless ordinary Americans

IN THIS ISSUE

The American Way of Life ..... *John Timmerman* 1
Theology and Schism ..... *James Daane* 3
Some Questions about Labor Union Membership ..... *Peter Van Tuinen* 5
Klaas Schoolland ..... *Jacob G. Vanden Bosch* ... 7
World Calling — Separation or Involvement ..... *George Stob* 10
Muenzer's Separatism ..... *Simon J. DeVries* 11
Letters to the Journal 15

The American Way of Life — Continued

who have been Christian, the late humanists have all recognized a law above the law of the thing. If the speaker was right, these voices have had their day. But it seems to me that he was misreading both our past and our present. Nobody would deny that the pioneer gouging out the continent, that Franklin, predatory capitalism, manifest destiny, pragmatism, and instrumentalism are American. They are peculiarly American, but they are part not the whole or central trait of our paradoxical American character and way of life. The speaker was then both right and wrong. My fret was that he never mentioned the end for which the means exist, and my worry is that he may be more right than I think.

I did not expect the speaker to quote Emerson on the danger of too many possessions; I have no quarrel with technology as such. I am no agrarian, and I don't care to move to Walden Pond to study the emerald pickerel. I would like to drive any new General Motors car. I am fully aware of the crucial importance of automobiles in the American economy. What distresses me is the careless confusion of ends and means, the resting in the materials of civilization, the sacrifice of ends to means. What is the paradise of machines for? Of that there was not a word, and I believe, without being naive, that there should have been such a comment. If we rest in the machines, we will eventually become machines. We will resemble the traveller who runs his car six hundred miles a day. Instead of landscape he has seen green lights, filling stations, and license plates. He has become a living joint between wheel and pedal. He is part of the Ford he drives. My point is that the real American sees beyond the means to the goals which they should serve. He has the "vision of latitudes unknown," and the vision goes beyond the dizzy thrust of the jet plane. It penetrates to the pattern of the ideal man, and at its best finds the ideal man in the Word of the Lord.

Since America has always had plenty, and since Americans have always had craft and energy, she has always been threatened by things. Mammon has always stood by with his hands full of gold. The astute Puritan traders, the canny Dutch, the solid Jersey farmers, the prosperous Quakers, the lavish Virginian planters merely begin a list of the exploiters of the fathomless resources of America. And only too often the Puritan found his heart in the counting houses of Boston. The pressure of things reached its unsavory peaks in the Gilded Age of Grant and the scandals of the Harding Administration. And the circle came full in the twenties when a descendant of the Puritans occupied the Whitehouse in Washington and said that the business of America was business.

The materialism of modern America needs no proof. One needs but to compare the revenue raised for the church and for cocktails. One need but to scan one's own budget to see where the money goes, and then to realize that most Americans contribute little or nothing to churches or Christian schools. Superficially considered, the speaker seemed sadly right. Furthermore, his remarks synchronized with the popular philosophy of our time — instrumentalism. Instrumentalism reduces the mind itself to a thing, and defines the good life as the successful integration of the mind, a thing, with the other shapes of things we call society. And so popular naturalism which reduces the spirit of man to electronics fuses with the mood of man in the street who worships the products of electricity.

Even though materialism may be the dominant trend in American life, it can not yet, I believe, be called the American way of life. The essential American tradition is still alive in many places. Dissent is still with us. The Puritan and Christian speaks in the noble verse and prose of Eliot, the humanist is alive in Frost, and even the American satirists like Wolfe and Lewis, whom we so often belabor, score heavily. There is alive yet the residual Puritanism in the social reformers and humanitarians. There are many believers who hold to a Christian ideal that always determines the use of things, that regards them as valuable only in relation to men, and man as valuable only in relation to God.

But the candle may be guttering at times, even among us. We need to be on guard; we need to check the use of our energies. Do we preserve for spiritual activity a wide margin of the leisure which machines provide? Is ou leisure creative as well as recreative Do we value freedom as we ought? Mo men, said Thoreau, lead lives of qui desparation. They will always do th if they live in things. Absorption things can only satisfy a society of ad lescents. Americans need a pep-ta like *Life Begins at Forty* because the have by that time neither master things nor acquired enough of them. one does not master things one can ne er acquire enough of them. Success measured by the bank-account, and th is never big enough, for the pers caught by the lure of material succe would rather drive a Cadillac on ti than a Ford paid up. Life begins wh one becomes aware of the central mea ing of spiritual values, when it is Gc centered. If the American way of l is to be in things, most adult America will lead lives of quiet desperation.

—John Timmerma

The Reformed Journal

VOLUME III NO. 9

SEPTEMBER, 1953

A Periodical of Reformed Comment and Opinion

EDITORIAL BOARD

Rev. Harry R. Boer, Dr. James Daane, Rev. George Stob, Dr. Henry Stob, Dr. Henry Zylstra

Published each month by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Subscription price: $2.00 per year

Entered as Second Class Matter at the Post office at Grand Rapids, Mich.

Address all subscriptions and communications to:

THE REFORMED JOURNAL
255 Jefferson Avenue, S. E.
Grand Rapids 3, Mich.

THEOLOGY AND SCHISM

By JAMES DAANE

THE recent break-up of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids is a sad event in the history of Reformed Churches. It is cause for more than a localized grief. There should be a general sorrow in Reformed Churches over this new rending of the body of Christ within the family of the Reformed Churches. Although it would seem that this event is a historical justification for the Three Points of 1924, it would be less than Christian if we of the Christian Reformed Churches viewed it as merely an event of self-justification. Such an attitude would be sinful. For whatever else this event may be, it should be experienced as a rending of the body of Christ, whose body we are.

The story of the division and sub-division of the Reformed Churches in Holland and America is not a pleasant story. While separation is not limited to the history of the Reformed Churches, it is significant that so much separation has taken place within a group of churches possessed of such a strong denominational consciousness. This new event of separation which has taken place within the Protestant Reformed Churches is cause therefore not only for grief but for careful reflection. It thrusts questions upon us which we ought to face anew. Why do Reformed Churches continue to break-up? When is a separation necessary and legitimate, and when sinful?

Our Centennial

THE whole complex of questions related to separation and independent existence are not easily answered. Yet the fact that we of the Christian Reformed Churches shall soon celebrate our one hundred year ago departure from the Reformed Church of America, gives such questions a particular relevance. If our people are to really celebrate our own act of separation and the one hundred years of independent church existence that followed it, they will have to think on these things. If they do not our celebration will be little more than an expression of mutual admiration and self-praise, coupled with a thanking of the Lord that we are not as other churches.

We cannot simply assume that what was known and felt a century ago, is known and felt now. Our membership will have to be informed and convinced of the necessity and rightness of our separation from the Reformed Church of America. This may indeed constitute a task. If we may speak of the existence of an ecumenical spirit a hundred years ago, then it would seem that the ecumenical spirit of our churches has undergone a change. Today we entertain sympathetic attitudes toward churches that have no official anti-lodge position. Today we make propaganda for denominational affiliation with the National Association of Evangelists which largely comprises churches that make no pretension to being Reformed. And today not a few of our elders and ministers find it difficult to endorse our non-transfer of membership papers to the Reformed Church of America. Thus the recent schism within the Protestant Reformed Churches, our changed feeling toward other churches, and our forth-coming Centennial, oblige us to careful reflection on such a question as: When and on what grounds is it legitimate to raise up an independent Reformed church alongside of an existing one? Serious reflection on such questions would be most wholesome.

Proper centennial thinking will require that we think on the schisms that appeared within our own churches. The history spelled by the Berean and Protestant Reformed Churches should not be ignored. It is a part of our history. These went out from our Church, not from another. Their theologies were developed within our denomination, not in some other denomination. This part of our history which gave birth to these theologies and these Churches may not be regarded as forgotten pages.

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

GENUINE ecumenicity is concerned with the neighbor and brother that lies closest at hand. They warrant as great a concern as does the pagan on the mission field. A genuine love for the Body of Christ requires that we be as serious to bring about the unity of the churches as we are serious to bring the pagan into the unity of the faith. Such serious ecumenical concern directs itself toward those churches with whom we have the most in common.

Indeed the concern for the unity of the churches and the concern for the gathering of the unconverted into the unity of the faith are not unrelated. Jesus prayed "that they may all be one . . . that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:21). Our concern for the unity of the brethren in the unity of the Church of Christ is so inter-related with our concern for gathering the non-Christian into the unity of the faith, that concern for the one can rise no higher than concern for the other. This indicates the essential unity between our Theology and Ethics, between our concern for the brother in Christ and our concern for the unbelieving neighbor.

A proper celebration of our Centennial therefore will require that we not only scan our one hundred years for God's blessings, but that we also scan the years for our denominational sins. It must needs be a time for repentance as well as a time for thanksgiving. We shall need the humility and courage to ask ourselves whether we have forsaken and abandoned the churches that went out from us to the hurt of their own errors. Have we disassociated ourselves from them as though they were no concern of ours, perhaps the more easily to take pride in our rightness? Are we pained by the cleavages that appeared in the past in our own churches? Have we been our brother's keeper, or has our brotherly love stood still at our denominational borders? Have we addressed those that went out from us by maintaining a theological conversation with them over the issues that divided us?

The record shows that we have not, and our failure deprives us of an opportunity to render real service now. Although they do not admit it, those of the Protestant Reformed Churches who now disagree with the Rev. H. Hoeksema have taken at least one theological step back toward the Christian Reformed Church. For this we can take no credit. Long ago we terminated the theological conversation about common grace. This places us at a distinct

disadvantage now, for the present situation in the Protestant Reformed Churches is hardly the best psychological moment to enter the discussion. Yet there would be point in demonstrating, if it could be done within the context of an existing theological conversation, that those who differ from Hoeksema and affirm the rightful place of "conditions" within Reformed theology have thereby theologically conceded that grace can after all be offered inasmuch as a condition is in its very nature of the essence of an offer. None can predict what might have been. But in view of what has now happened, it is not too fanciful to think that something very good might have come from a continuation of the common grace question with the Protestant Reformed Churches. In any case, it would have been no more than a brotherly concern for those who are of us, though they went out from us. If the theological issue of 1924 was significant enough to warrant a church split, it was also of sufficient significance to warrant a continuation of the theological conversation in the hope of a healing of the breach.

Boomerang?

I SUPPOSE the common grace conversation was terminated for the sake of the peace of the church. If so, our own history may teach us that the peace of the church is never procured by ignoring brethren in Christ. It is no secret that now after the long silence, common grace seems again on the way to becoming a subject of discussion within our own churches. It appears that some are not completely satisfied with our traditional position.

The leadership of our churches is openly expressing concern about alleged theological differences in our churches. Younger ministers are informed that they are being watched. Their theological development is said to be under scrutiny. If they are wise, it is said, they will consider this sufficient warning. Yet it is not at all plain what the wise will watch out for, since the alleged theological differences are left undefined. Since undefined and unidentified, the alleged differences can be neither considered nor addressed in theological discussion. Sometimes the differences are vaguely and darkly suggested to be Barthianism, yet since this assessment of the alleged differences is without any visible means of support and is usually modestly attended with a disavowal of any knowledge of Barthianism, there is no reason to believe that this assessment is correct.

Sometimes the difference is said to lie in the doctrine of common grace. Thus, for example, the Rev. H. J. Kuiper expressed himself in *The Banner*. I think him correct in discerning a difference at this point. There is in my judgment a real difference at this point, although I do not believe that the difference consists in a lesser or greater emphasis on this doctrine. Such a difference at any rate would not be a theological difference, for the simple reason that theological truths are not a matter of more or less. The fact, however, seems clear that some of the positions expressed on the absolute antithesis, Christian cooperation with non-Christians, and on other matters intimately related to the doctrine of common grace, cannot be reconciled with the expressed spirit and meaning of 1924. A genuine churchly concern for those who deny common grace expressed through a continuation of the common grace conversation would have also been wholesome for our own churches, and would perhaps have prevented the emergence of the differences that appear in our current thinking about common grace. Perhaps the strange theological sounds we now hear are the noise that we must now pay for our past silence.

Not a Small Theological Item

NONE should imagine that the doctrine of common grace is but a small bit of theology with no large importance. If we should come to think so, then we would have to regard the action of 1924 which resulted in the creation of the Protestant Reformed Churches as a very large mistake. Moreover, if it were but an inconsequential matter, how should we account for recent events in the Protestant Reformed Churches? If it justifies separate denominational existences, it can hardly be a small theological item.

I fear that we have given people the right to think that this doctrine is but a small matter. Perhaps we did so by drawing up the Three Points of 1924 without any consultation with other Reformed Churches. Our rather hurried formulation of the Three Points, together with the fact that we did it all alone, may have given the impression that this was not a large doctrine of large importance. Perhaps the fact that the Christian Reformed Church is the only church which has taken an officially binding position on common grace has created the impression that it is only of a local significance, without any large importance for the broad field of Reformed theology. Perhaps our long, strange silence has created this impression. Surely the view often expressed that common grace is of course true, but we must not stress it too much, has created the impression in people's minds that it cannot then be very important. If the situation is such that we must be careful that we do not stress common grace too much, then of course it is of no great importance for our theology or Christian life. But if it is a part of God's truth, then we ought not be afraid to stress it. Truth can be wrongly stressed of course, but then it ceases to be truth. But what is true in the Christian faith cannot be stressed too much. To urge that common grace is true but that it must not be stressed too much sounds very much like an admission that it is not true after all. To urge that we must be careful lest we stress common grace too much, is to refuse to take truth seriously. Truth is something to believe, and something by which to live. If common grace was a truth which warranted a break within our denomination, then it was a truth of large theological stature, something by which to live. The warning to avoid over-emphasis is an ignoring of the fact that God's truth is not constituted by the degree of our emphasis. Nor is the truth of God changed into untruth by heavy and serious accent. The claim that common grace should not be stressed too much should sound very strange in a Church which in 1924 stressed it so much as to make the Three Points of common grace an occasion for split in our denomination. Surely no member of the Christian Reformed Church who is stressing common grace today is stressing it as much as did his own church in 1924. Truth is something by which to live, not something to handle with hesitation and to stress with restraint. It is not thus that the faith once for all delivered to the saints is to be defended and proclaimed. Admonitions that common grace is to be given the light touch surely lead people to the opinion that common grace is

theological item of but small importance.

The doctrine of common grace is no mere appendix to Reformed Theology. It is a vital organ in the body of Reformed Theology. Surrender of the doctrine of common grace would affect the very nature of our theology.

Stated in the simplest terms, common grace is a matter of God's attitude and, therefore, a matter of the nature of God himself. It has to do with God's attitude toward the world, toward the sinful world, toward the unsaved and unregenerate. This tremendous truth is expressed in the general well-meant offer of salvation. As definitive of God's attitude, it is normative for the Christian's attitude toward the world, toward the sinful world, toward the unsaved and unregenerate.

As a doctrine that touches the nature of God, it touches the whole nature of our Theology. As a doctrine that touches God's attitude toward the world, it touches the whole nature of Christian Ethics. This doctrine, therefore, is neither a mere footnote to Theology nor of merely marginal interest to Christian Ethics. It is rather an essential ingredient of both our Theology and Ethics. Whatever differences there may exist, therefore, require cool and sober discussion. A mere adjustment of emphasis would be of no value, indeed would confuse the whole matter.

Root and All?

THERE is another good reason why the common grace discussion should have continued. The denial of common grace arose out of a theological spirit that existed within our churches. Although the denial was so strengthened by the considerable theological ability of Herman Hoeksema that his name has both in America and Europe come to be associated with a definite theological position, yet the fact remains that the denial arose out of a theological spirit that existed in the bosom of our churches. This should be of considerable significance to us of the Christian Reformed Churches. It should guard us against the unrealistic fancy that only one or two of that generation were touched by that spirit, and that the next generation, trained by the preceding one, would be wholly immune to that spirit. Present differences concerning common grace indicate that the spirit of Hoeksema's denial are not yet dead.

Moreover, it is in our own best interests to recognize that the denial of common grace arose *within Reformed Theology.* I am not suggesting that the nature of Reformed Theology leads to such a denial. But I would point to the fact that it did arise within our thought and conception of Reformed Theology. It appeared because of the manner in which we understood and dealt with Reformed Theology.

The fact that the denial of common grace arose out of the spirit of our Reformed Churches should make us realize that although none now deny common grace, the spirit of such a denial may still be with us. The motif which denied common grace did not come out of thin air. It came out of the bosom of our own churches. While it was given powerful articulation by Hoeksema, Hoeksema himself was a product of the Reformed theological tradition as it took shape in the Christian Reformed Churches. One need but take the viewpoint of an outsider. To an outsider the emergence of a denial of common grace within the Christian Reformed Churches would be regarded as indicative of something about these churches, even when recognized that these churches themselves officially repudiated such a denial.

If in 1924 we thought that the removal of Hoeksema and his friends completely extracted this motif and spirit from our churches, we were indulging in wishful thinking. Just as H. Bultema's departure did not eliminate from our churches every impulse to pre-millennialism and dispensationalism, Hoeksema's departure did not remove the whole root of the common grace denying spirit. Nor did it make the re-appearance of this spirit in our churches impossible. Indeed the old root seems to be sprouting a few new shoots. Looking back over the years it is not too much to say that our languid post-1924 interest in common grace at least suggests the possibility that if Hoeksema had moved more slowly and the issue had not been settled in so hurried a fashion, Hoeksema might well have brought a much larger sector of the church under the banner of his thought.

Finally, the fact that the denial of common grace arose within *Reformed* Theology should be of large significance to us. Is there something about the manner in which we handle it and conceive of it, that accounts for the fact that the denial of common grace arose within Reformed theology? Is there something that tends to move toward a denial of common grace in Reformed thought? I think there is, and I think it accounts for the peculiar form of some of the theological issues that have troubled Reformed Churches and played a part in their history of division and sub-division. This something is the rejection in theory but acceptance in actual thinking of the equal ultimacy of election and reprobation.

Some Questions About Labor Union Membership

By PETER VAN TUINEN*

WE are going to be asked to study and discuss the question whether Christian laborers and tradesmen can consistently be members of the "neutral" labor unions. Some of those among us who are close to the laborer's problems, and have thought much and seriously about the Christian laborer's higher responsibilities, believe that our Church should unequivocally declare that membership in the Church and membership in the "neutral" unions as we know them are incompatible. Our Church has dealt adequately with the theoretical side of that question. The answer is, "Yes, they are compatible provided that membership in the union does not interfere with the practice of one's loyalty to Christ." The Church has not dealt with the concrete aspects of the question, because it cannot. The

* *The Reverend Mr. Peter Van Tuinen is Minister at the Christian Reformed Church of Leota, Minnesota.*

Labor Union Membership — Continued

question as to whether one's union membership interferes with the practice of his loyalty to Christ is a question that can be answered only in terms of local, particular, individual, and personal considerations. No Synod can answer this question with a universal judgment.

There is a new vogue in evidence among us which would simply eliminate the concrete considerations from the whole program. Its contention is that no Christian can consistently cooperate with non-Christians in any organization for action involving moral principles. This theory offers an easy solution to the problem we face. But its solution is too easy. It oversimplifies the social question by ignoring the gracious operation of the Spirit of God in the common life of man. The theory is in direct conflict with the principles that underlie all of our synodical judgments on the labor union membership question to this day. To pursue its implications would involve a radical and complete departure from the standpoint our Church has always taken on the question of the Christian's duty in society. I do not believe that our Lord wants us to discredit and disown the fruit of His Spirit's working in the world, however much that fruit may be associated with sinful motives and sinful practices.

In the wake of the demand for a synodical declaration that membership in such organizations as the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organization, certain questions arise in my mind. I believe they are questions that must find an answer in our forthcoming discussion of the problem. I can best articulate these questions by suggesting a few hypothetical — though probably existing — concrete cases.

* * *

BILL is a carpenter, and used to belong to the A.F.L. He is conscientious about his Christian principles, and he spoke up in his local for what he believed was right. Sometimes he made his point; often he was defeated. It was hard going, and Bill grew weary of fighting. Finally he left the A.F.L. and joined the Christian Labor Association. Now there is one less voice against abuses in the A.F.L. Local of which he was a member, and Bill doesn't fight any more, at least not directly and personally. He does his fighting by proxy. Has Bill grown morally by the change? Is he making a more important and a more spiritually-significant contribution now than he did before?

Joe worked in a factory under a C.I.O. Union Shop agreement. He joined the Local in order to hold his job. He had no interest in the union, and did not attend its meetings. Fellow church members tried to persuade him that he had no business in the C.I.O. Joe said it didn't mean anything; he just looked upon his union membership as one of the requirements for holding a job. His friends reminded him of his corporate responsibility. Eventually Joe became uncomfortable under the admonitions of his friends, and found a new job in a C.L.A. plant. He never was an interested or active union member. He didn't become one now either, though, of course, he paid his dues. But his friends were satisfied; he was in a Christian Union. Is he giving a better account of his corporate responsibility now than he did as a member of the C.I.O.?

Dick works in a C.I.O. shop too. He is a thoughtful Christian with a sharp sense of responsibility. He is interested in social justice, and has a tender conscience about improper union practices. He is active and vocal in his union to promote what is right, and to fight what is wrong. He tries to get other Christians in his plant to support him in his efforts. Dick is a skilled and faithful worker, and could easily get a job in the C.L.A. plant in the same town. His Consistory thought he should, and repeatedly admonished him to that effect. Dick refused. He was convinced that he had a calling to carry out his witness here. He admitted that his union sometimes made itself guilty of evil practices over the protest of himself and others. But he saw that by prayer and persistence, and courage, and the increasing cooperation of other Christian laborers, headway would be made in correcting the abuses. His Christian conscience told him he must stay and fight. Should the Consistory proceed to censure him?

John and a couple of hundred other Christian men work in a factory, C.I.O. Union Shop. Most of them look upon the union as, at best, a necessary evil. "Of course, the union does a good many things we can't go along with," says John, "but what can we do? We can't all quit here; there aren't enough jobs elsewhere for all of us." The affairs of the local are conducted by forty or fifty men who are bent on using the union to promote their own selfish purposes. The Christian workers in the plant do not participate because their Church frowns on the union, and they think they had better not be active in it. The Consistories are troubled. They deplore the fact that so many members are in the C.I.O. But they can't muster up courage to tell all these men that they must give up their jobs. It looks like a deplorable impasse. Has a one-sided emphasis in the Church on Christian labor organization helped to make laborers irresponsible with respect to their corporate responsibility? Aren't the Consistories neglecting their duty to admonish John and his fellow-Christian workers to do their duty in the C.I.O. Local? Couldn't a couple hundred conscientious Christian workers take the control of the union out of the hands of the forty or fifty who run it now?

Frank is a Christian Labor organization promoter. He believes that the Christian labor organization is the only proper channel of responsible action for Christian laborers. His Consistory encouraged him in his crusading efforts. The elders believed that a Christian labor organization could perform an important service and carry on an effective witness in the field of labor relations. They encouraged the members to support Frank, and to help him build up a strong organization. Frank's diligent efforts, together with the encouragement of the Consistory were blessed with a gratifying measure of success. The organization flourished. But not all the labor membership of the church joined it. That displeased Frank. To him the Christian organization was the only right way. So Frank urged the Consistory to discipline those who, not seeing eye to eye with him in his view of labor union membership, thought it their duty to carry on their witness in neutral unions.

Frank had a good deal of support in the Consistory. One or two elders had agreed with his position right from the start. Others reasoned that now, since there is a Christian labor organization there is really no excuse for belonging to a neutral one. Several, in appreciation for the good work Frank had done and the crusade he had self-sacrificingly carried on, and for fear of seeming to double cross those whom they had

couraged to promote the movement, thought they should give their full official sanction to the movement. But fortunately, better counsel prevailed. After all, however admirable Frank's devotion to his ideal, however laudable the conscientious efforts of all who built up the organization, however praiseworthy the organization and its contribution: all this was not enough to warrant the binding of the consciences of those who did not participate in it. Does the fact that God blesses a movement prove that God does not approve another method to fulfill one's obligation in the same sphere? Does the fact that Christian workers suffer frequent defeat in their effort to witness for righteousness in a union prove that God wants them to give up?

* * *

I know, many of our people have arrived at a position from which they must say, "All these questions are irrelevant. The one point is that the neutral unions are 'in conflict with the authority of Christ and of the Holy Scriptures,' and therefore Christians must get out of them. But I maintain that these are our problems. The Church deals with Bill and Joe and Dick and John and Frank. The Church can determine whether they are loyal to their Lord and are faithfully carrying their Christian witness into the sphere in which they move and labor. The Church cannot, until a union adopts an avowedly anti-Christ position, determine whether it is irreparably "in conflict with the authority of Christ and of the Holy Scriptures."

Classis Chatham's Report and Advice is a somewhat misleading instrument. It appears to want to point out that the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. are organizations to which a Christian cannot belong. Actually, the main contention of the instrument is not this at all. The main contention is that a Christian may not cooperate with non-Christians in a neutral organization. That is the presupposition which underlies most, if not all, of the demand that our Church declare church-membership and neutral union-membership incompatible. That presupposition is in conflict with the historic position of our Church. What Classis Chatham asks for is not another advance step in our dealing with the Local Union problem on the basis of what we have already said, but what Classis Chatham asks for is a fundamental shift of principle on the whole question of Christian social responsibility. Until the Church is persuaded that Scripture demands such a shift of principle, let us deal seriously with the specific problems that Bill and Joe and Dick and John and Frank face, and encourage them in their respective witness.

KLAAS SCHOOLLAND

By JACOB G. VANDEN BOSCH*

In our biographical sketches so far we dealt with the lives of two clergymen, one trained in a parsonage largely by the method of apprenticeship, the other a graduate of the Theological School in its heyday. For our present sketch we shall occupy ourselves with a layman, who was a teacher and through his students exerted an appreciable influence in the development of our people.

This layman's name was Klaas Schoolland. He was born in 1851 at Ureterp in the province of Friesland of parents who espoused the cause of the Secession of 1834. He was brought up in a godly home where aspirations to do Kingdom work were encouraged. The desire to become a minister of the Gospel was gratified. From his sixteenth to his twentieth year he received private instruction from tutors and then entered Kampen where he finished the four year literary course in three years. Desiring a more advanced education than Kampen could give, he enrolled as a student in the University of Groningen and had gone far toward reaching his goal when he broke down. He had overtaxed his mental strength. No longer could he carry on his studies. For years he could not read for more than a few minutes at a time. Mental rest and travel in Germany and Switzerland which kind parents permitted him to do brought about a slow return of his strength so that finally he was able to settle in the city of Groningen and engage in tutoring private students. In this city he found an intimate friend in Franciscus Josephus Albracht, to whom he dedicated his *Rhetorica*, published in 1908.

Acting on the advice of a physician, he migrated to America in 1892 and settled in Maxwell City, New Mexico. Failing to find his environment favorable to his needs, he decided to make his home in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he arrived the following year and soon met Mrs. J. De Witte, whom he married. This union was blessed with four children and almost forty years of happiness. When in the fall of 1894 there came a vacancy in the teaching staff of the Theological School through the death of Gerrit Berkhof, some of the trustees remembered the brilliant student of Kampen and Groningen and urged his appointment to fill the vacancy. Mr. Schoolland, though accepting the appointment and rejoicing in the prospect of so congenial a task, nevertheless began his work with hesitation, for he knew full well that his powers were still feeble. So sensitive was he to sustained mental effort that he often felt unequal to his task. More than once he sent in his resignation and just as often was urged by the Board to continue his work. Seeking his strength in prayer and careful living — invariably he walked from two to three hours a day — he gradually grew stronger until finally he regained the intellectual endurance of his early days. In 1922, having taught Dutch and Latin six of the twenty-eight years and Dutch and Greek the remaining twenty-two, he retired. In September, 1938, he died at the home of his younger son, then pastor of the church at Harderwijk, after an illness of only two weeks. Five children survived him, who are still living: Mary, wife of E. Maring of Holland; John Bernard of Boulder, Colorado; Jenette, wife of Rev. John Gritter, of London, Ontario; Cornelius Matthew of Vancouver, British Columbia; and Marian, the author of several well known books.

---

* Professor Jacob G. Vandenbosch, who has contributed periodically to the *Journal*, is Professor Emeritus of the English Language and Literature at Calvin College.

Klaas Schoolland — Continued

No one could fail to be impressed with Schoolland, the man. He had what is hard to describe. Let us call it personality. Of this personality his physical appearance was no small part. Tall, well built, nobly featured, he had all the physical qualities that made for dignity and impressiveness. And in this impressive exterior there dwelt a soul richly endowed. Generously equipped with a strong mind and with emotional powers, he possessed the virtues of both thinker and mystic, a combination rarely to be found in one person. Natures strongly intellectual frequently tend to coldness and objectivity, while mystics, as a rule, do not excel in logical thinking.

This mysticism was in the case of Schoolland a natural endowment. He was naturally sensitive to spiritual influences. He believed strongly in the existence of a spiritual universe and in its influence upon man, and in personal conversation he would sometimes speak confidentially of unusual experiences that could not be explained without reference to the supersensible.

But it was the Christian faith that gave to his mysticism a special quality. Schoolland was a man to whom the Saviour was precious and he was not ashamed of witnessing to this fact. In the years of his leisure it was not uncommon to see him walking with a cane in one hand and with tracts ready for distribution in the other. He was a man of strong faith and of much prayer. He delighted to speak of the joy of life lived in the fellowship with Christ and of the blessings yielded by a life of prayer. Sometimes he would relate instances of remarkable answers to prayer in his own experience. One of the secrets of his deep piety must without a doubt be sought in his habit of daily studying his Bible. To study his beloved New Testament, always of course in the original, was his chief delight. During the years of his retirement he regularly devoted the major part of the forenoon to it.

Shortly after his arrival in New Mexico Schoolland was stricken with mountain fever and was critically ill, so ill that his life was despaired of. When he regained consciousness, the first words that came to him were those of Psalm 103: "Who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; . . . so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." He interpreted these words as a promise that God would restore to him his full mental vigor. The promise was fulfilled. In the later years of his life he could again apply himself to his studies without experiencing any evil effects. This experience is illustrative of the strong faith that was in him.

The subject of our sketch was the heir of a rich spiritual heritage. He grew to manhood at a time when the Secession in Holland had triumphed over seemingly unsurmountable difficulties and petty misunderstandings and still displayed its original ardor. For three years he attended the Kampen school and thus knew intimately what went on in his church. He saw the rising influence of Dr. A. Kuyper and admired him as a great prophet. He was present at the Synod held in Amsterdam in 1888 presided over by the genial Rev. W. H. Gispen and with approval heard the aged Professor Van Velzen of Kampen deliver a speech favoring the union of the Christian Reformed churches with those of the "Doleantie." The writings of Dr. Kuyper and his colleagues of the Free University he avidly perused and the cultural philosophy set forth by them he gladly embraced. Of the efforts of those leaders in the secession movement who against the philosophy of Kuyper pitted what through historical circumstances had developed into a restricted view of culture, a sort of "Kulturfeindlichkeit," he was a witness, but not a sympathiser.

At this moment it is necessary to set in the open an element in Professor Schoolland's thinking usually not found in Calvinistic thought. Theoretically the professor did homage to the Kuyperian idea of culture that Christ should be crowned king in every area of human endeavor, but in practice he did not always apply the implications of this idea. When Paul wrote, "All things are yours," he agreed; but a Christian's muse, he was wont to say, is a house muse. What he meant was, for example, that a Christian prefers to enjoy the world's best music in the family circle rather than at a public concert. One wonders how this touch of asceticism could find rootage in the thinking of a man who felt thoroughly at home in the atmosphere of Reformed thought. Unquestionably one can partly explain it by a voluntary abstention from the sin that mars so much of what the fine arts offer. But the wonder disappears altogether, when one learns that Schoolland had made room in his mind for a mild form of Premillenarian teaching ever since as a young man he had read a pamphlet on the subject written by a certain Rev. Sijpkens.

But Professor Schoolland was a scholar and a thinker as well as a mystic. Study was for him a necessity and a delight. Trained according to the severe scholastic requirements of the Dutch universities of his day, that mind of his was rigid in its demands and was never satisfied with a mere surface description of data, as if only the flinging of facts at the heads of students were teaching: by an inner compulsion he was led to inquire why things are as they are. He probed and probed until he had discovered the foundation on which facts and laws rest. Merely knowing, for example, a rule in grammar was not enough; the thought behind the rule must also be laid bare. Loving study, he was never at a loss what to do with his leisure moments. Even in his retirement he kept himself busy at his books and even developed new interests, prominent among which was a love of psychology. In very truth he could say as he usually did with a twinkle in his eye, "Colleague, I am busy; I was never so busy as I am now."

No, the learned professor was not the least disposed to allow reason to rust from disuse. If he was driven by an irresistible desire to trace ideas to their sources, he must also teach his students to do the same. Independence was also a characteristic of his thinking. Books were sources of information, but never did they serve as a substitute for conclusions arrived at by individual effort. Even when he studied his Bible, thus he was wont to say with a knowing smile, he was concerned not with what creeds say, but exclusively with the meaning of the Word. But for Schoolland reason, for all its usefulness, was merely a formal activity of the mind which derives its content from other sources, in ultimate truths exclusively from faith. Not only does the Word of God furnish the starting point

it also determines the character and the results of thinking. The sovereign God must be present in the thinking process from beginning to end. Reason must not presume to prove the validity of faith. To begin with faith and then to retrace the steps taken for the purpose of justifying logically initial assumptions is not to be tolerated. Nor may there be antagonism between reason and faith. They must cooperate.

As a teacher of Dutch, Latin, and Greek Professor Schoolland stressed the linguistic aspects of these languages. The study of fine points in etymology and in grammatical forms and constructions was his joy. It mattered not how little was the ground covered in translating a text; his chief concern was to ferret out difficult points and to offer his explanation of them. His method differed widely from that prevailing in America today which emphasizes the mastering of a reading knowledge of a language with the ultimate aim of getting at the thought conveyed. A summer spent at the University of Chicago confirmed him in his conviction that the traditional method of teaching a language was far superior to the new. He felt that it was more in keeping with the high tradition of scholarship to study the Latin as such of Vergil's *Aeneid* than to introduce students to the literary riches of this great Roman epic.

No doubt good students were richly rewarded by sitting at the feet of Professor Schoolland. Intuitively they felt that they had been in the stimulating presence of an able scholar and had undergone the impact of a great mind. But the learned discussion of fine points went beyond the reach of many a student. The erudite teacher took too much for granted; he forgot that the young men sitting at his feet were not graduate students at a university, but merely beginners. Besides, his ideas were sometimes obscure because that curious mind of his was easily lured into bypaths which taken by themselves were interesting enough, but which diverted the attention from the main idea. Seeing too much, he all too often left the outlines of his thought in a blurred state.

One of the problems confronting every Christian teacher of Latin and Greek is what his attitude should be to classical culture. Schoolland, too, wrestled with this problem. His Christian faith might have prompted him to discard the classical languages and their literatures as the remark seemed to suggest which he once made in the presence of a group of colleagues that the world would be better off if all books were burned except the Bible — he paused a few moments and added — and Plato. And Plato. He could not burn the works of his beloved Plato or of any major classical author. He saw too much of truth and beauty in the

Glory that was Greece

And the grandeur that was Rome.

But the question whether there could be traffic of any kind between Christianity and classical paganism persisted and pressed for an answer. Professor Schoolland gave his studied conclusions in his address delivered at the Quarter Centennial celebration of the Theological School in 1901. The sum and substance of these conclusions was that, since modern civilizations, those of Western Europe and America, had their origins in those of Greece and Rome and had developed from them, the study of the classical languages was essential to a sound liberal arts education. Even the study of the New Testament, he maintained, could not be properly conducted without a thorough knowledge of the ancient world.

It should not be forgotten that Professor Schoolland used his pen freely. He had it in him to be a productive scholar. For one thing, mastering a subject meant that he express the content in his own words according to a scheme that the material called for logically. For another, he always felt it his duty to treat a subject from the Christian point of view. The publishing of his results was for him a form of Kingdom service. He published but one book, *Rhetorica;* most of what he wrote was in the form of contributions to such newspapers as *De Gids, Ons Vaandel,* the *Gereformeerde Amerikaan,* all of them now defunct. Politics, ethics, psychology, pedagogy were the subjects that inspired him to write. Among the unpublished manuscripts left at his death are his voluminous notes on the New Testament. In the field of politics, he was one of the organizers of a party, for which the Latin name *Fas et Jus* was chosen. This clearly was an imitation of the Anti-Revolutionary party in Holland, but it did not succeed in accomplishing anything permanent. Because of its name which sounded too much like faucet juice the party soon became an object of ridicule. Besides, our fellow countrymen were averse to anything savoring of Calvinism.

To sum up, Professor Schoolland was a European teacher in an American college. He brought with him a disciplined mind cherishing rigorous standards of scholarship. By constantly throwing the weight of his influence against adopting easy methods and low standards, he was an important voice in the councils of Calvin College. But he brought with him something far better — his intense devotion to the Calvinistic ideals. There had to be vital forces in the classroom. He, therefore, was one of the channels through which Calvinism as a world and life view came to us. As long as Dutch was still a living language among us, the books and periodicals of Dutch Calvinists were an effective means of conveying the rich fruits of a revived Calvinism to us in America. But Schoolland was more than this: he was a living example of what Calvinism does for a man who in his own right is a scholar and who at the same time believed heart and soul in the sovereignty of the triune God.

How easy is pen and paper piety, for one to write religiously? I will not say it costeth nothing, but it is far cheaper to work one's head than one's heart to goodness. Some, perchance, may guess me to be good by my writings, and so I shall deceive my reader. But if I do not desire to be good, I most of all deceive myself. I can make a hundred meditations sooner than subdue the least sin in my soul.

THOMAS FULLER: *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*

WORLD CALLING— Separation or Involvement

By GEORGE STOB

THE Christian Labor Association's recent pamphlet: "Pioneering Toward a Christian Society" (digest of which appeared in the last issue of the *Journal*), is a document of large importance.

It is more than a statement which explains the position and commends the cause of the CLA as a labor organization. It is a statement which endeavors to set forth basic Christian social principles, to outline a program of Christian social action, and to define the Christian's duty and task in the organized life of society.

All this is done, naturally, with reference to only one group — the laborers. But what is said here of the calling of the laboring man is based upon judgments concerning every Christian's relationship to the world. It has bearing, therefore, upon the life of every Christian who is caught up in the social task — the medical man, the merchant, the manufacturer, the community-member, the citizen. If the laboring man is called to the task of "pioneering toward a Christian society" through membership in a separate Christian organization, this is no less the calling of every Christian member of society.

This is, therefore, a document of tremendous importance for all of us. For if the CLA case for the advisability or the necessity of a separate labor organization is valid, it must be thought equally advisable or necessary to establish separate medical associations, merchants' associations, cultural and civic organizations, and political associations or parties, for the prosecution of the Christian social task in all other areas of social life.

What Is World-Calling?

THE Christian has a duty toward the world in which he lives and toward the human society of which he is a member. The Christian's duty is more than that of witnessing to the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ. It is also his duty to participate in the life and task of human society, to recognize his responsibility with respect to the ordering and functioning of its life, and to exert his influence as a Christian upon that life to a good and proper end.

It is this Christian-social task with which the new CLA pamphlet is concerned. This is a sound and wholesome approach to the question of the rationale of a separate organization. The Christian's task is the point of departure — not his safety, his security, nor the protection of his good standing as a church member. The pamphlet is concerned with Christian world-calling. This is good. Because among Christians who are united in one faith, live in loyalty to the same Lord, and yet differ in their judgment of the necessity of separate Christian organization, this is the crucial question: What is the Christian's calling in the world as a responsible member of human society?

It is good that this stands in the forefront. And it is needful. Perhaps we have been unduly caught up in the rather *ad hominem* question of the Christian's loyalty, and have too much looked upon thinking about and relation to social organization as a test of one's commitment to Christ and against the evil world. I suspect that this is because we have spent more time on the "how" than on the "what" of the Christian's calling. Perhaps it is time that we look more carefully and thoroughly into the "what" of the Christian's calling in the world. The CLA pamphlet, because it puts this matter at the forefront, encourages and demands this inquiry.

Unfortunately, however, the pamphlet itself does not give a basic and reasoned statement of its conception as to what the Christian's social calling is. It seems to assume that this is clear. But it isn't. And as for the CLA conception of the basic character of the Christian's task, the only indications are those found in the title of the pamphlet, and in statements concerning the CLA objective.

If these are to be taken at face value, it would appear that the CLA proceeds on the assumption that it is the Chrisian's calling to strive in his world for the Christianization of secular society. Christians are being invited to share in the effort of "pioneering toward a Christian society." One of the efforts of the CLA is said to be the indoctrination of workingmen so that they may have the "intelligence needed for the building of a Christian social order" (p. 3). "It is the responsibility of the Christian worker . . . to help make the Christian alternative to modern secularism, utilitarianism and paganism a more and more compelling reality" (p. 4). Christian Workers Groups will be set up, "which have as their aim the struggle for a Christian social order in American society" (p. 4). The CIO and AFL are not sufficient because "both miss the vision of a Christian social order" (p. 8).

There are other statements in the *Christian Labor Herald* (CLA), which similarly represent the goal of Christian social effort. The CLA, it is said, "will not be satisfied with some negative influence in the direction of eliminating certain offensive practices which may outwardly give the appearance of raising the 'neutral' union to a somewhat higher moral level, but which actually leaves it as pagan as ever" (*CLH*, Aug. 1953, p. 2). "There is a Christian Labor Association, whose aim it is to bring better, to bring Christian relations about in industry and in the whole of social-economic life" (F. P. Fuykschot, *CLH*, July 1952, p. 3). "The Christian cannot be satisfied with anything less than subjecting all — also the union of which he is a member — to the will of God as expressed in the Bible . . . In the giving of himself to the service of God, in seeking subjection of all to the glory of God, there is for the Christian worker a solution of the social problem, *not* in the raising of an organization to a higher level of morality which only outwardly conforms to the will of God" (*CLH*, May 1953, p. 2). "Western civilization is not going to be saved by plugging a hole here and there, by placing a Christian teacher here and there in so-called neutral institutions, or through Christian workers here and there joining mighty union Christian organizations. There is only one way in which it can be saved. That is: by subjecting it to the will of God. That subjecting may be accomplished by exerting positive, strong and clear influence through organized Christian efforts within society, but outside of established, organized so-called neutral unions . . . We claim that the only hope of reconquering the world for God, or subjecting it to His will, lies in the way of the organized efforts of Christian people, acting unitedly on the basis of the Word of God" (*CLH*, June 1952, p. 2).

A Christian Society?

THESE are prodigious claims, even for a Christian social organization, and to project them seems to put a very big load on Christian men, even strong and well-organized Christian men. It hardly seems consistent with what we all profess concerning human depravity and the power of sin in the world. We know well enough that men are totally depraved, that our world is under judgment and destined to destruction, and that the Kingdom of God will become a full reality in the world's life only through the cataclysmic intervention of God's saving and renewing power. But, perhaps because of our preoccupation with Calvinistic slogans to the effect that we must subject everything to the glory of God, make God sovereign in every sphere of life, and conquer the world for Christ, we often fail to rightly understand the limitations which the realities of sin and depravity in human society put upon the Christian's calling in our depraved and doomed world.

It seems to me that the CLA statement of the Christian's social objective is scarcely a right statement of what the Christian is expected to strive for *in* the world or *for* the world. It sounds rather like something which one would envision *apart from* the world or *against* the world. And I wonder if in the orthodox vocabulary this statement of the Christian's calling might not have some connection with the strong conviction with respect to separate Christian organizations and what they are able to accomplish.

A "Christian social order" might, indeed, seem less remote if only the movement for separate Christian organizations, founded on Christian principles, governed by a Christian constitution which recognizes the Infallible Word, guided by Christian leaders, and comprising a Christian membership, should succeed in every area of social life. And we are told that separate Christian organizations would succeed if only Christians would recognize and do their duty. Their success would, presumably, be a very large step toward the achievement of a Christian social order. At least, separate Christian organizations in the social sphere might help to achieve the Christianization of some segments of society.

The one great difficulty, however, is that this is no direct address to *the* social problem. It is rather an escape from it or else an attempt to deal with it by long distance and indirection — that is, by the convenient method of witness from the outside, not by the hard effort of involvement on the inside. In any event, there is a shirking of the real social problem. For the real social problem is not the problem as to how one may find a Christian social organization in and through which he may live a Christian life in the social arena, but it is the problem as to how to secure such a measure of justice, decency, and order in the life of the whole mixed society of regenerate and reprobate as will make human life possible and fruitful.

The fear that this concern for separate Christian organizations might be a skirting of the real social problem and result in the formation of escape islands in the sea of social life is not without foundation. We have been told often enough that the so-called neutral labor organizations are so wicked that the Christian had better withdraw from them and take up membership in a Christian labor organization. Only in the latter, it is said, can he live out his Christian convictions, and only the latter kind of membership is compatible with Church membership. This quite negative and essentially separatistic concern gets pretty clear expression in the statement of principles of the recently founded Calvinistic Culture Association. With reference to "Social Organizations" the statement says: "The CCA declares, in keeping with her antithetical position, that she looks upon Christian organization as the requirement of our principle, as demanded on the ground of God's Word. Only through the means of Christian organization can we give form and fashion to the Calvinistic principle of life *in our hearts*" (*De Wachter*, Aug. 25, 1953, p. 503; my italics — GS). Christian organization is presumably calculated to serve the Christian conscience; but it seems to have no other relevance to modern society except to witness antithetically against it.

It must be said, however, that this escapist and separatist concern is no part of the argument of the new CLA pamphlet. The pamphlet, as I indicated before, is avowedly concerned with world-calling. It pleads for separate and independent organization which pioneers toward the achievement of a Christian society. But it is right here that one begins to wonder about the propriety of the CLA statement of the Christian's social calling and objective. If it is the Christian's social calling to "build a Christian social order" and to save Western civilization "by subjecting it to the will of God . . . in the way of the organized efforts of Christian people," then it is obvious, since the so-called neutral organizations are informed by the modern mind and not the mind of the gospel, that the Christian must operate only through a Christian organization which is committed to the presuppositions and the ultimate goals of the Christian Gospel. Plainly, it is only in a Christian society that one can expect the building of a Christian social order.

The Christian Social Goal?

BUT I submit that this is not a proper statement of the Christian social objective in and for a sinful, totally depraved, and doomed world. If it were, it would have to be acknowledged that this achievement is no more within the reach of a separate Christian social organization than it is within the reach of the body of Christians who exist as a redeemed organism within the life of human society. And if Christian organizations are raised which are committed to this social objective, the objective could be attained only within the narrow confines of the Christian organizations, and the Christian organization would have meaning directly only for its own membership. However conveniently this might resolve the social problem of a group of Christian people, it would not be an adequate address to the social problem of the whole of our common society.

In fact, it would be a skirting of the real social problem. It may possibly be true that a Christian organization that remains independent and separate "is in a better position to give concrete realization to its ideals" (p. 2), but only within the confines of its own membership. At the same time, the separate Christian organization will place its membership — the living Christian power — at a farther remove from and in greater isolation from the life and problems of our common society. In this position the separate Christian organizations can be only a long distance example and an indirect challenge to the "secular ideals and methods of organization in labor." For its members will be without voice, without vote, without power, without direct interest in, without direct responsibility for the social organizations which they have re-

pudiated and from which they hold themselves apart.

Beyond that the separate Christian social organizations could serve only two purposes: (1) They would be escape islands in modern secular society for the residence and rest of Christian social consciences. However relevant (rightly or wrongly) to the individual problem, they would be irrelevant to the social problem which burdens our common life. (2) They would be antithetical organizations which — already having given up the world, and quite unconcerned about the lack of success in its long distance endeavors toward the world — exist only *for* the regenerate social man and *against* the rest of modern society. If I am not mistaken, most of our enthusiasm for separate Christian organization rests upon this two-fold concern — the concern for finding for the Christian an organization that gives rest for his conscience and doesn't disturb his good standing as a church member, and the concern for finding agencies for giving organizational expression to the principle of the antithesis. Whether in so doing one deals rightly with his conscience, or rightly understands and deals with the antithesis, is the big question.

Here again I say that these concerns do not come to expression in the argument for separate organization found in the new CLA pamphlet. The pamphlet is concerned with world-calling, and wishes to enlist men who will join in pioneering toward a Christian society. But the CLA, I am sure, does not really believe that this social goal can be achieved within history. It will be achieved only at the end of history and only through the powerful intervention of divine judgment and renewal. And the CLA will not presume that even widespread separate Christian social organization will effect that achievement toward which they have been pioneering.

But if that be so, what is the meaning, the relevance, or the purpose of our pioneering. One doesn't mean, certainly, that we do the spade work, make the approach, while God finishes off the job. What meaning then can this pioneering toward a Christian society have? None, it seems to me, except to provide occasion for the Christian, in the difficult work-shop of the world, to exercise the regenerate life of the Kingdom subject. Or else, the pioneering toward a Christian society, which only God will effectuate beyond history, means the exercise of an antithetical witness against reprobate and lost human society.

The Present Social Problem

NEITHER of these, however, are social objectives which minister to the need and problem of our common social life. A legitimate social objective is an address to the present social problem and capable of at least partial and meaningful realization. The Christian, as God's child, and as God's representative in the world and for the world, has a social job to do *here and now*. It is a social job which permits a measuring of our failures and accomplishments. It is a task which we through God's grace and as His servants in society accomplish or fail to accomplish *now*, according to the measure of our faithfulness and consecration.

There are attainable social objectives in our common social life. Jesus exhorts us to the recognition of them, and indicates that our service in these social duties will be taken into account in the final judgment. We can feed the poor with bread, give to the thirsty water to drink, provide a ministry of Christian mercy for the sick (give blood for wounded soldiers to the Red Cross, contribute for cancer and polio treatment and research), be hospitable to the stranger and wandering (orphans' homes, homes for the aged and feeble, DP resettlement), visit those who are in prison. We can — in the confidence that if we are diligent and committed it will make a real difference in society — "seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

These are social objectives which are the common problem and the common concern of all the members of our society. We can join with our fellowmen in the pursuit and achievement of these social goals, and there is no need for setting up a separate Christian organization for the achievement of them. The humanist is committed to them, too, and we ought to be honest and humble enough to acknowledge that he has worked harder at them and accomplished more in the way of the social good that helps to preserve human society than separatist and antithesis-minded orthodox Christians.

Interestingly enough, when the CLA pamphlet gets down from the abstract statement of the Christian social objective and sets down in concrete terms what it envisions for the achievement of "Social Justice," it speaks precisely of such social goals as moral men in our society set before themselves and have already in their social effort fought for. It is not an exclusively regenerate Christian goal to work for a basic minimum standard of living, full employment, an annual wage system, family allowances for workers, non-exploitation for private gain of natural resources, an internationally minded tariff policy, elimination of racial discrimination. The unbeliever and the liberal believe in and work for a measure of co-partnership as essential to the health of economic society. And others besides Christians have insisted that there is a larger and deeper meaning to work than the getting of money (It would be interesting on this score to compare one issue of *The Reader's Digest* with a volume of Christian Reformed sermons).

* * *

IN all this striving for social goals which are the concern of non-Christians as well as Christians, there is no reason why the Christian should'n't join in common effort and organization with his human fellows for the realization of common social ends in and for our common life. If the Christian social objective is rightly defined — if it is conceived in terms relevant to and meaningful for social living in this world, and not in terms of a goal attainable only outside of history by divine intervention — it may be seen as a goal within the reach of grace-empowered common human effort, and does not require the establishment of separate Christian organizations. Nor is the separate Christian organization required because the Christian can, in social matters, live in keeping with Christian principle only through its agency. Much less is separate Christian social organization required in order to give due expression in the life of the world to the principle of the antithesis.

This will appear, I believe, from closer scrutiny into the Biblical teaching concerning the measure and meaning of the Christian social task, and from an inquiry into the purpose and social relevance of the Scriptural teaching of common grace. I hope to speak of this in another article.

Muenzer's Separatism

By SIMON J. DE VRIES

If one understands Muenzer's mysticism, it will be easy for him to account for his extreme separatism. In the main, Muenzer adopted the Anabaptist theory of the Church, which was that the Church is purely constituted of true believers alone without any admixture of unsanctified elements. In other words, only the elect constitute the Church, and they are all perfect. With the Anabaptists, Muenzer rejected paedobaptism since infants necessarily cannot bear the mark of election, which in Muenzer's opinion, was the mystical experience of the inner voice. He likewise repudiated every association between "the Church" and the civil government. His elect were not only not *of* this world, but properly speaking they were not *in* it either. Thus he was *a priori* opposed to the medieval concept of the mixed Church as maintained both by the Catholics and by the Lutheran reformers.

Muenzer believed that it was possible to make a sharp distinction already here in this life between the elect and the non-elect. In this his extremism stands out sharply. The Roman Church has always believed that it is not possible to be certain of justification or of election, not even in one's own heart. Luther believed, however, that a Christian could be reasonably sure of his justification but scarcely dared to be positively assured of his election, even on that basis. Calvin thought that a saint could have reasonable assurance both of justification and of election by observing the fruits of faith in his life and through the testimony of God's Spirit in his heart. But none of these dared do what Muenzer did, viz., to find the certainty of election in an entire group. Muenzer believed that *all* of his followers — or at any rate, those who gave evidence of having experienced heavenly revelations — were the elect, the true saints of the Most High. All other people were necessarily reprobates and enemies of God. Hence the vast scorn and bitterness which Muenzer and his disciples manifested toward what he called "make-believe Christians." Believing it necessary to establish "a church within the church," he gathered his elect into conventicles or leagues and appointed "apostles" and "disciples" from their number. In Zwickau Muenzer raised to special prominence one Nicolaus Storch, a common cloth-weaver whom Muenzer declared to be greatly versed in "the Word of God" and in the inner testimony of the Spirit. (This Storch was one of the notorious "Zwickau prophets" who caused so great a commotion in Wittenberg shortly before Luther's return to that city in 1522.) Further, Muenzer preached a communistic organization as the ideal arrangement for his groups, in the typical fashion of several enthusiastic sects of the late Middle Ages.

Being aware that only extraordinarily serious-minded people would prefer his bitter way to faith to what he considered the easier road of the Wittenbergers, Thomas Muenzer strenuously required of his "elect" followers that they repudiate all earthly and fleshly elements as coming from the devil. This was a polemic against sensual objects and activities which he shared with the common type of ascetic, mystic, and Anabaptist — a polemic which the main impulse of the Reformation entirely omitted. Muenzer professed to have no use for the things of "the flesh," and he heartily despised all "fleshly" people. The reader will recall in this connection the words of Muenzer's which were quoted above (p. 8): ". . . it is necessary that God should take away his fleshly lusts; and if the movings of God make themselves felt in his heart, it is necessary that all desires should be slain . . . for a beastly man receives not the things that God speaks in the soul." We read elsewhere in Muenzer's writings statements like this: "The righteousness of God must continue to stifle (*erwuergen*) our unbelief until we are ready to acknowledge that all desire is sin."[1] As we would expect, one of Muenzer's favorite spite-names for Luther was "Flesh," for in Muenzer's eyes the Wittenbergers were too soft, too fleshly, too earthly. He also called Luther "Fat-pig" and Melanchthon "Easy-liver."[2] It appears that most of the normal activities and enjoyments of life, and not only the things which orthodox Christians would ordinarily consider to be positively sinful and worldly, were taboo to Muenzer and his "elect" followers. Their attitude will be recognized as an extreme expression of the typical Anabaptistic (and mystical) tendency to other-worldliness and separatism.

One pauses to wonder, as he reads of Muenzer's passionate polemics against "the flesh," whether his life was actually as purely moral as he would seem to have claimed it to be. Knowing from observation of other "spirituals," as *e.g.*, John Philip Noyes and various modern-day cultists, that fanatical disavowals of fleshliness sometimes accompany gross and hypocritical immorality, one is inclined to give a certain amount of credence to the unfavorable reports concerning Muenzer's personal morals which were made by various contemporaries of his. Luther in his *Table Talk* and Alberus in his *Buch wider die verfluchte Lehre der Carlstaedter und Sacramentierer* assert unabashedly that upon various occasions Muenzer had proposed immoral relations with certain women under the pretense that a divine voice had instructed him to do so as a work of mercy and as a service well-pleasing to God.[3] Whether this dreadful charge is true, or whether it was nothing more than part of the bitter name-calling which passed back and forth between Muenzer and his opponents, is probably impossible to ascertain. At any rate this much can be safely said: Muenzer did nothing to prove an ethical superiority of his "unfleshliness" over the evangelical doctrine of the Reformers, but on the contrary he himself constantly violated many of the most cardinal moral precepts of Christianity. His theory would never stand under the practical test of biblical morality.

---

1. Strobel gives several similar examples of this teaching, *op. cit.*, pp. 172, 180, 185, *et passim.*

2. *Ibid.*, p. 200: "Bruder Mastschwein und Bruder Sanstleben." A particularly scurrilous attack upon Luther is Muenzer's *Hoch verursachte Schutzrede und antwort, wider das Gaistlose Sanstlebende fleysch zu Wittenberg, welches mit erklaerter weyse, durch den diepstal der heiligen schrift die erbermdliche Christenheit also gantz jaemerlichen besudelt hat*, etc., summarized by Strobel, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-68.

3. Cited by Strobel, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

4. *Works of Martin Luther*, Philadelphia: Muhlenburg, 1930; III, 210. Calvin, as is well known, shared this negative attitude toward insurrection. See his *Institutes*, IV, xx, 23, as also an excellent brochure about *John Calvin on God and Political Duty* by John T. McNeill (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1950), pp. xvii ff.

5. Thus Fr. Engels in *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of 1880, Zimmermann in *Geschichte des Grossen Bauernkrieges*, Kautsky in *Communism in Central Europe*, Bloch in *Thomas Muenzer als Theologe der Revolution*, *et alii.*

Muenzer's Mysticism — Continued

Muenzer's Insurrectionism

It is interesting to observe the manner in which Muenzer's mystical separatism led him and his followers to take an active part in the Peasants' Revolt. The peasants were, of course, rudely treated by their feudal overlords. During the Revolt several of the princes, as also Luther himself, admitted this fact and proposed reforms. There was already considerable unrest among the lower orders before All Saints' Eve of 1517, and when the peasants saw that Luther had to a great measure succeeded in challenging the tyranny of the Roman hierarchy, they took heart to believe that they might similarly succeed in a revolt against their civil rulers. Luther did nothing to encourage civil rebellion, however. On the contrary, he did everything in his power to oppose it. In January of 1522 he clearly indicated his positive stand against civil disobedience in a tract entitled, "An Earnest Exhortation to All Christians Warning Them Against Insurrection and Rebellion." He wrote: *But the mind of the common man we must calm, and tell them not to give way even to the passions and words which lead to insurrection, and to do nothing at all unless commanded to do so by their superiors or assured of the cooperation of the authorities . . . My sympathies are and always will be with those against whom insurrection is made, however wrong the cause they stand for, and opposed to those who make insurrection, however much they may be in the right. For there can be no insurrection without the shedding of innocent blood and wrong done to the guiltless.*[4]

It was Thomas Muenzer and men like him who fanned the flames of incipient rebellion. Muenzer felt entirely sympathetic toward the aspirations of the peasants. Indeed, the misery of the proletariat was precisely what he meant by "the cross," *i.e.*, the boundary-situation or extremity of distress which was a vital step in his mystical way to sainthood. There are, of course, two obvious possibilities for the down-trodden classes: either to revolt or to suffer patiently, hoping for improvement. The Mennonite wing of Anabaptism, like the mystical Quakers of a later time, chose the latter course — the course of submission and of pacifism. Thomas Muenzer, like the Muenster Anabaptists a few decades later, chose the course of rebellion. Muenzer was extremely apocalyptic. He believed that his was a "bitter Christ," a stern Judge who had chosen him to be His prophet and to wield the sword of His wrath. He believed that God was giving him direct commands to overthrow the tyranny of church and state without unnecessary delay. The downtrodden serfs he thought to be God's persecuted servants and he called upon them therefore to seize the opportunity of God's great apocalyptic moment and to bring in the Kingdom of Glory.

Writers with socialistic leanings are naturally very sympathetic toward Muenzer and tend to make of him something of a hero. For them he was the noble pioneer of the "people's movement." They are quite willing to overlook the man's fanaticism and cruel excess, while at the same time they have nothing but scowls for Luther and for the other enemies of revolt.[5] Muenzer was indeed a communist and a revolutionary, and, in conjunction with the inflammatory preacher Heinrich Pfeiffer, he worked to incite the rebels to ever more violent measures against both ecclesiastical and civil institutions.

There is no need to chronicle the tragic details in this article; the histories have provided those details in abundance. It might be helpful at this point, however, briefly to illustrate how Muenzer egged on the revolting peasants until the very end. When Philip of Hesse surrounded Muenzer's band of desperate peasants near Frankenhausen on May 15, 1525, the poorly-armed and terrified serfs were inclined to surrender and to accept the mercy which the prince offered them. But Muenzer had recourse at this critical juncture to another of his mystical revelations and declared to his serfs that even now God would give them the victory. "Today we shall behold the arm of the Lord," he cried, "and all our enemies will be destroyed!" "Fear nothing, I will catch all their balls in my sleeve!" A rainbow appeared as seeming confirmation of God's protection, and Muenzer put to the sword a young nobleman whom the prince had sent to him as his truce-envoy, thus depriving the rebels of all hope for pardon and driving them to desperation. Thereupon the cannon-balls began to crash against their rude bastion. The end was bloody tragedy. Thousands of pitiable, misguided peasants were slain, and at last Muenzer himself was taken to be beheaded alongside of his lieutenant Pfeiffer. This was the bitter end to which "the inner voice" had driven a misguided enthusiast.

Evaluation

It is difficult to love a fanatic like Thomas Muenzer. No doubt his sympathy for the downtrodden is to be commended, and possibly it is true that at times Luther and Protestantism in general have allowed themselves to remain altogether too complacent in the Christian duty of trying to remove social evils. But Muenzer's violent and anarchical methods spoiled all the good he tried to procure.

Muenzer's warning against a barren dogmatic externalism cannot be viewed as utterly misguided when we remember that Lutheranism itself eventually deteriorated into somewhat of a dry and scholastic "orthodoxism." Insofar as he emphasized the need for personal and vital faith Muenzer was on the right track. The Word without the Spirit is dead indeed. However, Martin Luther never did forget the necessity of the Holy Spirit in the studying and preaching of God's Word. The Word requires the testimony of God's Spirit if it is to become alive within the sinner's soul. This has always been evangelical Protestant teaching.

If it is true that the Word without the Spirit is dead, the opposite is likewise true: "the Spirit" without the objective enscripturated Word is entirely too arbitrary and erratic to be trusted. For proof, only observe the irresponsible course followed by Thomas Muenzer under the influence of this "inner light." Truly he acted like a man possessed by the Devil and not by the Spirit of God. It should be sufficiently clear from observing his career that without an objective norm of faith and morals there can be no limits whatever upon the arbitrary possibilities to which man might be led.

Moreover, it would seem obvious that Muenzer's mystical subjectivism helped prepare the way for Rationalism in Germany. His emphasis upon the free will and on the final authority of an inner voice, as also his minimization of the objective Scriptures, erected a bridge to the Enlightenment, whose tendencies were strikingly similar.

a matter of fact, Muenzer agreed with Erasmus on many basic points. It is doubtless no accident, therefore, that the Anabaptists and the Humanists of the post-Reformation era were often in close alliance. Certainly one thing the history of Thomas Muenzer helps make clear: the close linkage between mysticism and Anabaptism and Rationalism.

Finally, Muenzer's radicalism must be criticized as involving an utter disregard for the cardinal Christian precept of love. Probably Muenzer and his followers had little true love for one another, for they were constantly judging one another to determine whether they were truly elect or not. Nor did Muenzer and his disciples have Christian love for those outside their own immediate circle, thus disregarding the Saviour's admonition to love even one's enemies. Least of all did they have any love for or show any gratitude toward Luther, the person who had revealed to them the way out of the darkness of Roman superstition. Yet further, it may be seriously questioned whether Thomas Muenzer even had a genuine love for God. His Christ was a bitter Christ, and his God was no more than a fearful God of wrath. Since love is the prime virtue of Christianity, and since a person's heart is revealed by his deeds, Muenzer's type of religion must ever stand under a heavy cloud of suspicion.

Thomas Muenzer had been delivered out of the superstition of Romanism when he joined the Reformation, which was good; but he carried the spirit of liberation to so great an extreme that he at last became an actual enemy of that Reformation. We are forcibly reminded of the Saviour's parable found in Matthew 12:43-45, which reads as follows:

But the unclean spirit, when he is gone out of the man, passeth through waterless places, seeking rest, and finding it not. Then he saith, I will return into my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first.

Jesus said this of his own evil generation. In a sense, it was also true of Muenzer. "The last state of that man becometh worse than the first."

LETTERS TO THE JOURNAL

Does Establishing Necessarily Include Approval?

The word "establish" is found on many pages of Scripture and is not difficult to understand. The general meaning of it is: to confirm or: to cause to stand. In many cases it is said of God that He establishes things or persons. God established His covenant with Noah, with Abraham, with Moses and the children of Israel and later with David. The prophets also speak of God as establishing a new covenant with His people. And in Ps. 90 Moses asks the Lord to establish the work of their hands.

I believe it can be accepted that in all these places where God is said to establish a certain thing it also means that He approves of those things which He establishes. In other parts of Scripture "establish" is mentioned as an act of man. In Numbers 30:14 a husband may establish or make void a vow or vows made by his wife. If he "altogether holds his place from day to day, then he *establisheth* and confirmeth them." In this case it does not necessarily mean that the husband *approves* of the vows of the wife, but his silence is taken for confirmation. In Daniel 6 we read that king Darius established a decree that no man might ask any petition of any God except of the king. King David evidently did establish this decree to please the governors and counselors and princes. There is no evidence that he either approved or disapproved of it as a moral issue.

There are also many incidents mentioned in Scripture where plainly God establishes or causes to stand the word or deed of man though He does not at all approve of what was done or of the way it was done. To mention but a few: God confirms the blessing which Jacob received of his father Isaac, and establishes His covenant with him at Bethel, though certainly He did not approve of the way in which Jacob at the instigation of his mother obtained it. And whereas Isaac was authorized to pronounce the blessing, therefore it remained upon Jacob, even though Isaac thought he was blessing Esau.

When the Lord commanded Moses to speak to the rock in order to bring water out of it for the children of Israel and Moses instead smote the rock twice with his staff, God did establish the act of Moses by producing the water, but He in no wise approved of it. Instead He very much disapproved of Moses' action, so that he was prohibited from entering the promised land. Moses acted within his rights as leader, for which reason God confirmed his action, but because he did it not as the Lord had said, he is severelv punished.

When David committed adultery with the wife of Uriah and then had Uriah killed to cover up his sin, the Lord was greatly displeased at what David had done and punished him severely, but God also forgave his sin and established his marriage with Bathsheba by making His covenant with Solomon.

And to mention only one more example: When Pilate condemned Jesus to the death of the cross, it was evidently a deed which was against all sense of justice and against Pilate's own judgment. And therefore it was a deed of which God did not approve. But because Pilate acted in his right as Roman governor God caused that judgment to stand. Jesus Himself tells Pilate that "he could have no power at all against him except it be given him from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee has the greater sin."

From these examples from Scripture it is plain that God often does *not approve* of the things which He establishes or causes to stand, when those actions are performed by God's own authorized powers in their own proper domain.

It has become increasingly evident to me through private discussion, by private correspondence and also by some public expressions that those two attitudes of God are not properly distinguished and kept separate in the matter of marriage relations problems. If a couple are married according to law and by the proper authorities which in this case is the civil government God confirms that action and causes it to stand. But it does not mean that God therefore also approves of that particular union.

In the same manner God confirms the action of the civil court when it divorces a couple, because the power to do this belongs to the civil court and is given it of God, but the Lord certainly does not approve of a divorce, for He saith: "Let not man put asunder that which I have joined together." Therefore though man sins in asking

for a divorce though the civil court grants a divorce of flimsy grounds against the law of God, nevertheless because the court had the power and acted in its own proper domain, *God causes that divorce to stand.*

To continue this trend of thought, if persons who were divorced marry another party during lifetime of former partner they sin against the ordinance of God. The State which establishes this second marriage does not conform to the law of God. But for the same reason of being God's authorized agent He also confirms that second marriage. Yet at the same time God disapproves of what the State has done.

It should therefore be plain that what God establishes must stand and no individual or ecclesiastical organization can disannul that or demand a breaking of such a bond. That would be contrary to the power which God Himself has established and whose action He confirms.

But it is just as plain that in spite of this establishment and confirmation the sin of the related parties has not been forgiven nor wiped out. No more than Moses' sin was forgiven or wiped out, because God confirmed his wrong action.

It is indeed regrettable that this distinction between establishment and approval has been so much lost sight of. If you do not keep those distinctions clear you come to all kinds of perverted conclusions. Then you begin to picture the State as a godless institution to which you need not pay any heed in matters which you as an individual deem to be contrary to the law of God, even though the State acted in its own proper territory. You would subject the State to your own private opinion and accordingly approve or condemn it. But the State is responsible to God for its actions and not to you, as a self-appointed authority. Each individual of course has the right to persuade the government to act differently, if you can do so through the proper channels. But if you fail in this, you are still subject to the State and not the State to you.

According to this same reasoning a couple in second marriage must remain in that bond, once it has been established and must not break it nor be persuaded to break it either in part or in full. That clearly would be another breaking of God's ordinances.

A clear distinction of these truths also clears the way for the proper exercise of discipline if there is an ecclesiastical contrast. The State does not interfere with the proper exercise of discipline one whit. Just so the Church takes heed not to disintegrate what the State as God's minister has established and is therefore by God Himself confirmed. The Church must demand that sin or sins be acknowledged and admitted and that genuine sorrow for those sins must be experienced and expressed. David did not try to hide or minimize his guilt once his eyes were opened, and God forgave also both his adultery and murder. This is the spiritual key which the Church must handle to open the door of the kingdom for repentant sinners and to close it for those who would justify their sins, no matter for what reason.

The general assembly and church of the firstborn in heaven consists solely of sinners, come to repentance and adopted as God's children.

PETER L. VAN DYKEN

NOTE: In my former article on the "Divorce Problem" (May Issue of the *Reformed Journal*) I have made an error. I stated that the Synod of 1952 adopted the quotation: *Marriage has become a civil matter,* instead of what was accepted by both reports that *marriage is a civil matter.* However this change of wording was not advocated by the committee for pre-advice, as I had stated but it had its source on the floor of Synod contrary to the advice of the Committee. Rev. Elco Oostendorp as Reporter of the Committee for pre-advice has called my attention to this misrepresentation and I do hereby stand corrected. I should have investigated this more thoroughly before writing.

P. L. V. D.

Ripon, Calif.
September 11, 1953

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

I was pleased to read the article in the August issue of the *Reformed Journal* devoted to excerpts from the CLA publication, *Pioneering towards a Christian Society.* We are looking forward to comment.

It will undoubtedly interest *Journal* readers also to know that the CLA recently sponsored a meeting, held in its building at Grand Rapids on August 23 for the purpose of discussing Christian social principles and formulating eventually, a Christian Social Program.

The meeting was attended by a number of prominent Christian leaders. The CLA was represented directly by three of its officers, Ralph De Groot, Joseph Gritter and Henry C. Van Wyk. Rev. Louis J. Dykstra of Chicago, and Mr. Walter De Jong, Principal of the United Christian High School, were present the first named acting as moderator of the meeting. The CLA Expansion Drive Committee was represented by Dr. Dirk Jellema and the Messrs. J. Neal Rensenbrink and Richard Templeman. The following Professors and instructors of Calvin College also attended: Henry J. Ryskamp, Henry Zylstra, Donald H. Bouma, Enno Wolthuis, John Vanden Berg, Henry P. Ippel and George G. Harper.

After an all-day meeting it was decided to meet again on October 23, the same place. Several more leading men will be invited to attend at that time. From these meetings, we hope a national Christian Social Conference will develop, some time in 1954, at which a broad program for Christian Social Action will be adopted.

CLA Reporter

O make this heart rejoice, or ache;
Decide this doubt for me;
And if it be not broken, break,
And heal it if it be.

COWPER, *Olney Hymns*